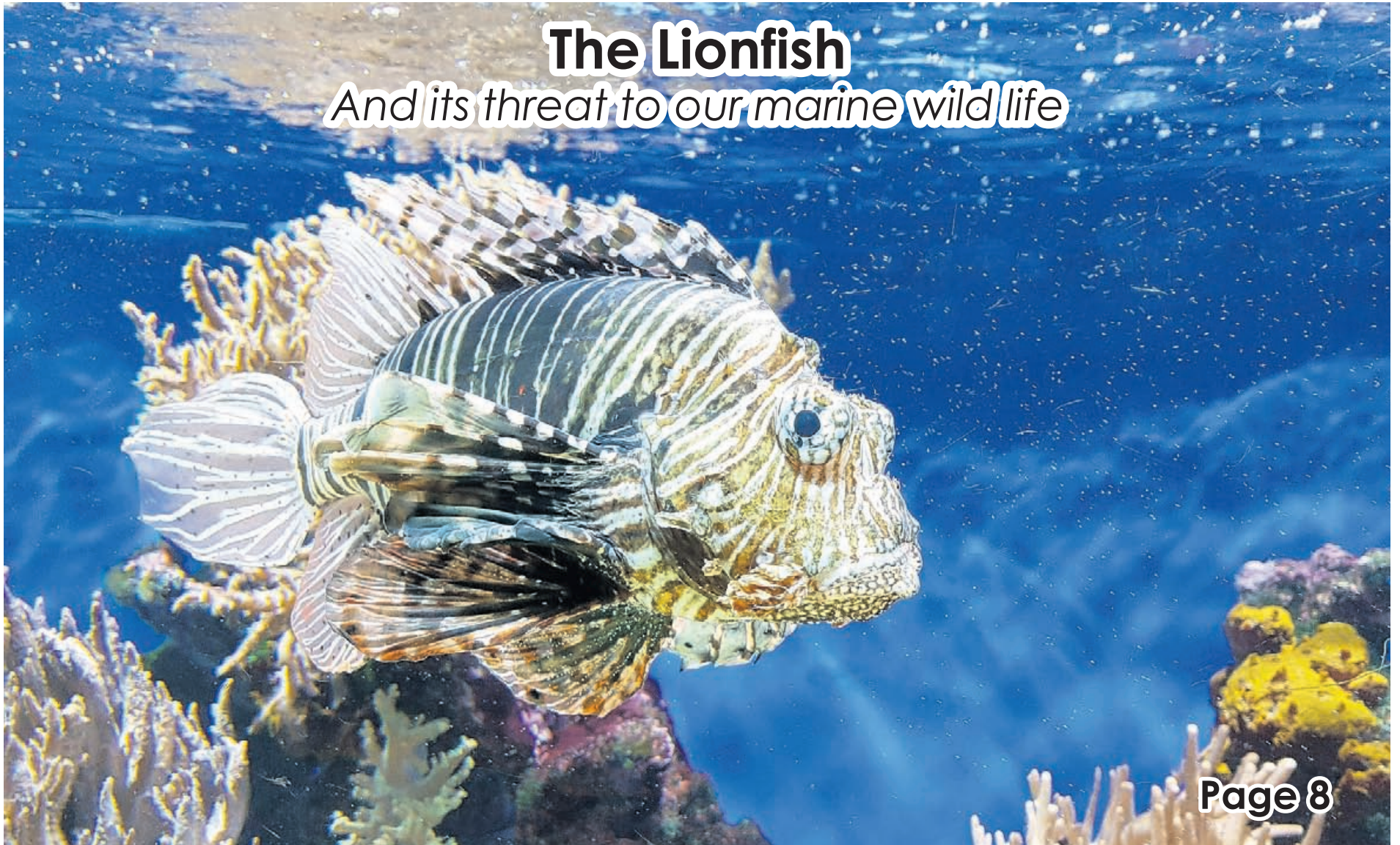




The Lionfish And its threat to our marine wild life



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22 Democratic-led states sue Trump administration over Planned Parenthood funding cuts

By SOPHIE AUSTIN
Associated Press/Report for America

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP)

— More than 20 mostly Democratic-led states sued the Trump administration Tuesday over its efforts to cut Medicaid payments to the nation's largest abortion provider Planned Parenthood.

The move comes in response to the package of tax breaks and spending cuts Trump signed earlier this month. A portion of the new cuts are focused on services such as cancer screenings and tests, birth control and treatment for sexually transmitted infections by ending Medicaid reimbursements for a year for major providers of family planning services.

The cuts apply to groups that received more than \$800,000 from Medicaid in 2023. The goal was to target Planned Parenthood, but the legislation also af-



California Attorney General Rob Bonta speaks at a news conference at the San Francisco Public Library's Bernal Heights branch in San Francisco, Dec. 4, 2024.

Associated Press

ected a major medical provider in Maine. California, New York, Connecticut, other states and Washington, D.C. argue in a complaint filed in the U.S.

District Court for Massachusetts that the provision's language is unclear about which groups it applies to. They also say it retaliates against Planned Parent-

hood for advocating for abortion access, violating the free speech clause of the First Amendment. The states are asking that the portion of the law be

blocked and deemed unconstitutional.

The cuts threaten health care access for many low-income Americans, California Attorney General Rob Bonta said at a news conference.

"This attack isn't just about abortion," the Democrat said. "It's about denying vulnerable communities access to care they rely on every day."

But the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, named a defendant in the suit, defended the provision.

"States should not be forced to fund organizations that have chosen political advocacy over patient care," spokesperson Andrew G. Nixon said in an email. "It is a shame that these democrat attorney generals seek to undermine state flexibility and disregard long-standing concerns about accountability." □

Georgia Republican Marjorie Taylor Greene won't run for governor in 2026



Rep. Marjorie Taylor-Greene, R-Ga., presides over a House Committee hearing on Capitol Hill, Feb. 12, 2025, in Washington.

Associated Press

By JEFF AMY
Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) — U.S. Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene announced Tuesday that she won't run for governor in Georgia in 2026, putting an end to her flirtation with the race in a long social media post saying she is turned off by a political "good ole boy" system and alleging that it was endangering Republican control of the state. Greene chose earlier not to run for Senate under pressure from Republicans who feared she would hand a second term to Democratic incumbent Jon Ossoff. But she told reporters she might instead run for governor during a June appearance at the Georgia Republican Party convention in Dalton, where she wore a "Make Georgia Great Again" hat

and discussing state issues.

Greene said she would focus on the northwest Georgia congressional seat that she has held since 2020 but left open the door for a future run.

"One day, I might just without the blessing from the good ole boys club or the out-of-state consulting leeches or even without the blessing of my favorite president," Greene wrote. "One day, I might just run purely out of the blessing of the wonderful people of Georgia, my family and friends, but it won't be in 2026."

Gov. Brian Kemp is ineligible to run again due to term limits, but other Republicans are already in the race, including Attorney General Chris Carr and Lt. Gov. Burt Jones. Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger hasn't ruled out a run. □

What Americans think about Israel's military action in Gaza, according to a new Gallup poll

By LINLEY SANDERS and AMELIA THOMSON-DE-VEAUX

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Support for Israel's military action in Gaza has declined substantially among U.S. adults, with only about one-third approving, according to a new Gallup poll a drop from the beginning of the war with Hamas, when about half of Americans approved of Israel's operation. The new polling also found that about half of U.S. adults now have an unfavorable view of Israel's prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, the most negative rating he has received since he was first included in Gallup polling in 1997.

The poll was conducted from July 7-21, while reports of starvation in Gaza led to international criticism of Israel's decision to restrict food aid but before President Donald Trump expressed concern over the worsening humanitarian situation.

The findings underscore the Israeli government's dramatic loss of support within the U.S. But not everyone is shifting instead, the war has become more politically polarizing. The rising disapproval is driven by Democrats and independents, who are much less likely to approve of Israel's actions than they were in November 2023, weeks after Hamas' Oct. 7 surprise attack and after Israel expanded its ground offensive in Gaza.

Republicans, on the other hand, remain largely supportive of both Israel's military actions and Netanyahu.

Most Americans now disapprove of Israeli military action in Gaza

The new poll finds that about 6 in 10 U.S. adults disapprove of the military action Israel has taken in Gaza, up from 45% in November 2023.

Support for the war has been dwindling in Gallup's polling for some time. In March 2024, about half



Palestinians carry sacks of flour unloaded from a humanitarian aid convoy that reached Gaza City from the northern Gaza Strip, Sunday, July 27, 2025.

Associated Press

of U.S. adults disapproved of Israel's military action in Gaza, which fell slightly as the year wore on.

In a new low, only 8% of Democrats and one-quarter of independents say they now approve of Israel's military campaign. Some of that decline may be attributed to the change in administration. While former President Joe Biden faced significant pushback from fellow Democrats on his handling of the conflict between the Israelis and the Palestinians, they may be even more frustrated by the approach of Trump, a Republican.

Young adults are also much more likely to disapprove of Israel's actions. Only about 1 in 10 adults under age 35 say they approve of Israel's military choices in Gaza, compared with about half of those who are 55 or older. Gallup senior editor Megan Brennan says the latest figures reflect the enduring partisan divide. Even as Democrats grow increasingly unhappy with Israel's military campaign, Republicans remain supportive.

"We've seen this drop in approval since last fall, and it's really driven by Democrats and independents," Brennan says.

"Republicans are still willing

to be in this for the time being."

Netanyahu's favorability among U.S. adults is historically low

Views of Netanyahu have also grown less favorable over the past few years, with more viewing him negatively than positively in measurements taken since the war in Gaza began.

About half of U.S. adults, 52%, now have an unfavorable view of Netanyahu in the new poll, which overlapped with Netanyahu's recent visit to the U.S. Just 29% view him positively, and about 2 in 10 either haven't heard of him or don't have an opinion. □

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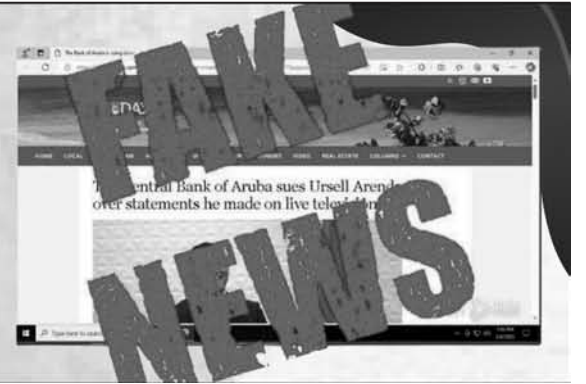
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ICE says detained Maine police officer overstayed visa. The chief says he cleared a federal check

By PATRICK WHITTLE

Associated Press

OLD ORCHARD BEACH, Maine (AP) —

The chief of police in a Maine resort town has called for an investigation into the arrest by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement of one of its officers, whom the chief said was federally approved to work in the country in May.

ICE arrested Old Orchard Beach Police Department reserve officer Jon Luke Evans, of Jamaica, on July 25. The agency said Evans was illegally present in the U.S. and unlawfully attempted to purchase a firearm.

ICE said in a Monday statement that Evans had legally entered the U.S. in September 2023 and violated the terms of his admission by overstaying his visa. But Old Orchard Beach Police Chief Elise Chard said in her own Monday statement that the U.S. Department of Homeland Security had verified that Evans was authorized to work in the U.S. in May of this year.



This image provided by the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement shows Jon Luke Evans.

Associated Press

The Old Orchard Beach Police Department and ICE officials did not respond to requests for a status update about Evans' case. It was unclear on Tuesday if

he had access to an attorney.

ICE and Chard presented different accounts of Evans' employment by the town. Chard said the de-

partment was notified by federal officials that Evans was legally permitted to work in the country and his authorization document would not expire until 2030.

Chard said the town submitted information via the Department of Homeland Security's E-Verify Program. E-Verify is an online system launched in the late 1990s that allows employers to check if potential employees can work legally in the U.S. Some large private employers use it, but most do not.

She said the department is "distressed and deeply concerned about this apparent error on the part of the federal government" and will investigate to determine what steps it can take to ensure the town's compliance in the future. She said the department would also conduct an internal review of the circumstances of the case.

"The Old Orchard Beach Police Department was never officially informed about Evans' detention, and the department officially learned the details of the matter in a news release issued by Immigration and Customs Enforcement," Chard said. □

Oklahoma authorities investigate reports of explicit images on state education chief's TV



Oklahoma Superintendent of Public Instruction Ryan Walters speaks during a special state Board of Education meeting, April 12, 2023, in Oklahoma City.

Associated Press

By JAMIE STENGLE and JOHN HANNA

Associated Press

An Oklahoma sheriff's office Monday opened an investigation over reports that images of nude women were displayed on the state's school superintendent office television during a meeting with education board members.

Top Oklahoma lawmakers have sought answers over accounts given by two State Board of Education members, who said they saw the images during a meeting in Ryan Walters' office Thursday. Another board member, Chris Van Denhende, said he was not in a position to see the television but that "something was on the screen that should not have been," based on Walters' reaction.

The investigation is in the early stages, said Aaron Brillbeck, a spokesperson for the Oklahoma County Sheriff's Office. He said it was not clear if any laws were violated.

Walters, a Republican, has spent much of his first term in office lauding President Donald Trump, feuding with teachers unions and local school superintendents, and trying to end what he describes as "wokeness" in public schools.

Brillbeck said the sheriff's office was investigating at the request of the state's Office of Management and Enterprise Services, which handles technology, human resources and property management issues for state government. □

China and U.S. may work to extend latest tariff deadline, Chinese official says

By JAMEY KEATEN and DIDI TANG

Associated Press

STOCKHOLM (AP) — China's top trade official said Tuesday that China and the U.S. agreed to work on extending a deadline for new tariffs on each other, following a two-day trade meeting in Stockholm. The U.S. side said extension plans were discussed, but not decided.

Li Chenggang told reporters after the meeting that the two sides had "constructive" and "candid" discussions and agreed to work on extending a pause in tariffs beyond the latest deadline of Aug. 12 for a comprehensive trade deal. However, Li didn't say how the extension would work, and U.S. Trade Representative Jamieson Greer said the U.S. team would head back to Washington and "talk to the president about whether that's something that he wants to do," though he did say such an extension was discussed during the talks.

U.S. Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent said the discussions "centered on the two economies." He said the U.S. side expressed concerns that China is producing goods at a rate beyond what is sustained by global demand. It also expressed concerns that China was purchasing Iranian oil and



Chinese Vice Premier He Lifeng arrives to Rosenbad ahead of the second day of trade talks between China and the U.S., in Stockholm, Sweden, Tuesday July 29, 2025.

Associated Press

supplying Russia with dual-use tech that could be used on the battlefield. Bessent said the U.S. side reiterated its trade program and policy, which is to reduce the trade deficit and increase domestic manufacturing.

"But the overall tone of the meetings was very constructive," Bessent said. Li, China's international trade representative, said the two sides had "comprehensive and in-depth" discussions on macroeconomic issues, agreeing to keep close contact and to "communicate with each

other in a timely manner on trade and economic issues." Chinese and U.S. trade officials opened their latest two-day round of trade talks in the Swedish capital on Monday to try to break a logjam over tariffs that have skewed the pivotal commercial ties between the world's two largest economies.

On the first day, the talks lasted nearly five hours behind closed doors at the Swedish prime minister's office. Before the talks resumed Tuesday, Swedish Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson met with Bessent and Greer

over breakfast.

The United States has struck deals over tariffs with some of its key trading partners including Britain, Japan and the European Union since U.S. President Donald Trump announced "Liberation Day" tariffs against dozens of countries in April. China remains perhaps the biggest unresolved case.

"The Chinese have been very pragmatic," Greer said in comments posted on social media by his office late Monday. "Obviously we've had a lot of tensions over the years. We have tensions now, but the

fact that we are regularly meeting with them to address these issues gives us a good footing for these negotiations."

"Whether there will be a deal or not, I can't say," Greer added in the clip from MSNBC's "Morning Joe" posted on X. "Whether there's room for an extension, I can't say at this point. But the conversations are constructive and they're going in the right direction." Many analysts had expected that the Stockholm talks would result in an extension of current tariff levels, which are far lower than the triple-digit percentage rates that were proposed as the U.S.-China tariff tiff crescendoed in April, sending world markets into a temporary tailspin.

The two sides backed off the brink during bilateral talks in Geneva in May and agreed to a 90-day pause which is set to end on Aug. 12 of those sky-high levels. They currently stand at U.S. tariffs of 30% on Chinese goods, and China's 10% tariff on U.S. products.

The Stockholm meetings didn't provide any clarity about the prospects for a summit later this year between Trump and Chinese President Xi Jinping, seen by some as a crucial step to lock in any major agreements between their two countries. □

Attack on military base in Burkina Faso kills about 50 soldiers, residents say

LAGOS, Nigeria (AP) — An attack by an armed group on a military base in northern Burkina Faso has left about 50 soldiers dead, according to accounts by a community leader and a resident on Tuesday. The Jama'at Nasr al-Islam wal-Muslimin group, or JNIM, was suspected of carrying out the attack Monday on the base in Dargo in Boulsa province in the northern region of the landlocked West African nation.

The two sources, who spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because they feared repercussions from the military, said about 100 militants participated in the attack, and that the gunmen burned and looted the base after the killings.

The military government has yet to publicly acknowledge the attack.

JNIM, one of several armed groups conducting attacks across West Africa, has been blamed for hundreds of civilian and military deaths.

Burkina Faso is witnessing a surge in attacks by armed groups who are in control of most of the country, especially outside of the capital.

The deteriorating security situation has led to political shifts in the country and served as the pretext for back-to-back coups. The military leader, Ibrahim Traore, has been unable to rein in the Islamist groups despite his redrawing of political and military allies. □



Burkina Faso President Ibrahim Traore is seen at the Kremlin in Moscow, Russia, on May 10, 2025.

Associated Press

U.N. conference backs two-state solution, calls on Israel to commit to a Palestinian state

By **EDITH M. LEDERER and FARNOUSH AMIRI**
Associated Press

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — High-level representatives at a U.N. conference on Tuesday urged Israel to commit to a Palestinian state and gave “unwavering support” to a two-state solution, signaling widespread international determination to end one of the world’s longest conflicts.

The “New York Declaration” sets out a phased plan to end the nearly eight-decade conflict and the ongoing war in Gaza. The plan would culminate with an independent, demilitarized Palestine living side by side peacefully with Israel, and the nation’s eventual integration into the wider Mideast region.

The two-day meeting, which ends Tuesday, is taking place amid the latest reports that starvation and famine are taking place in Gaza, and growing global outrage at Palestinians not getting food due to Israeli policies and practices — which Israel denies.



Luxembourg Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Xavier Bettel addresses the United Nations General Assembly, Monday, July 28, 2025.

Associated Press

Israel rejects the notion of two states

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu opposes a two-state solution and has rejected the meeting on both nationalistic and security grounds. Its close ally, the United States, is also boycotting, calling the

meeting “unproductive and ill-timed.”

The conference, which was postponed from June and downgraded from world leaders to ministers, for the first time established eight high-level working groups to examine and make proposals on wide-ranging

topics related to a two-state solution.

The declaration’s plan says conference co-chairs France and Saudi Arabia, the European Union and Arab League, and 15 countries that led the working groups agreed “to take collective action to end

the war in Gaza.”

Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan urged the rest of the 193 U.N. member nations “to support this document” before the start of the 80th session of the U.N. General Assembly in mid-September. The declaration condemns “the attacks committed by Hamas against civilians” in southern Israel on Oct. 7, 2023. It marks a first condemnation by Arab nations of Hamas, whose attacks killed about 1,200, mainly Israeli civilians, and whose militants took about 250 people hostage. Some 50 are still being held.

The declaration condemns Israeli attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure in Gaza and its “siege and starvation, which have produced a devastating humanitarian catastrophe and protection crisis.” Israel’s ongoing offensive against Hamas has killed over 60,000 Palestinians, according to the Gaza Health Ministry, which doesn’t distinguish between civilians and combatants. □

Trinidad and Tobago extends state of emergency as threats hatched in prison persist

By **ANSELM GIBBS**
Associated Press

PORT-OF-SPAIN, Trinidad (AP) — Legislators in Trinidad and Tobago have extended a state of emergency after the attorney general said the twin-island nation’s prison system has been compromised. He blamed prison officers and even attorneys of helping inmates accused of plotting to kill high-ranking officials.

Authorities recently moved high-risk prisoners to military bases as part of a recent crackdown on jailed gang leaders accused of using smuggled cellphones to plot a series of assassinations, robberies and kidnappings with help from criminal associates on the outside.

Attorney General John Jeremie revealed to Parliament on Monday that

some prison guards could openly be heard warning inmates when specialized police agents showed up to conduct prison raids, and he also accused some attorneys of illegally helping those behind bars.

“The system has been compromised, and it has been

serving inmates as a protected criminal command center,” Jeremie said.

The latest state of emergency in Trinidad and Tobago was extended for three months after authorities warned that the threat of a plot to kill key government officials and attack

public institutions still exists. The initial emergency was declared on July 18 and was expected to last 15 days. However, the Caribbean nation’s Parliament convened an extraordinary sitting on Monday to extend the measure until late October.

“We are here for an extension, we are here because the threat exists,” Saddam Hosein, legal affairs minister, said during the sitting. Prisoners who were deemed “high risk” were moved to military bases in west Trinidad, but that didn’t deter attempts to interfere with their detention, according to the attorney general.

“Those locations that they were removed to were very recently also infiltrated by two drones,” Jeremie said, adding the military thwarted those attempts.

Meanwhile, the Prison Officers’ Association, which represents prison guards, has condemned the accusations against the guards. It’s the second state of emergency that the twin-island republic implements in a matter of months. Last December, authorities took similar action, citing concerns about gang violence. That state of emergency lasted until mid-April.

While members of Parliament from both the government and the opposition unanimously voted in favor of extending the emergency, the main opposition questioned whether there had been any major arrests in the first 10 days of the measure being in place.

Government officials noted that police have arrested more than 340 people and launched over 800 operations so far. □



The country’s coat of arms is displayed on the facade of a government building in Port-of-Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, Aug. 20, 2024.

Associated Press



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The stories of “Compa Nanzi”



(Oranjestad)—The most popular character you may hear about in the Caribbean is Anansi, known locally on Aruba as “Compa Nanzi”. Local children grew up hearing the tales of the conniving spider, and his legacy forms part of the oral narrative tradition that is common in Aruba.

Although the stories are most popular in the Caribbean, “Compa Nanzi” is not entirely unknown globally, especially not in the West African region. Brought to the “new world” by enslaved Africans from Ghana, the historical thread of how Nanzi was introduced on Aruba follows the enslaved Africans in Curacao during the colonial era, which saw the biggest population of enslaved Africans in the Dutch Caribbean. The stories of Compa Nanzi were a sign of hope for freedom among the slaves, who passed around different stories involving the famous spider through word of mouth, due to not being able to express their native culture in the new world. These stories were a way to not only preserve their culture, but it acted as a medium for relief during the harsh treatment to which they were subjected to.

It wasn’t until the end of the nineteenth century that the stories of Nanzi were written down in different languages. However, not all stories are completely alike in every country, as is the risk of oral

story telling. However, one thing will always be dominant in Compa Nanzi’s stories: his sneaky ways to get what he wants!

How Nanzi fooled the king

One day Nanzi was taking a stroll near the castle of Shon Arei, the king. He had this sudden urge to walk in. He didn’t think too much about it and committed to what he had in mind. It was a warm afternoon, and the castle personnel were taking their afternoon nap. Even the soldier guarding the castle door was fast asleep, snoring so loud that his beard bounced up and down on his chin. Nanzi just slipped past him, looked back for a moment then walk right on in. Nanzi stumbled upon the king’s quarters. With all his excitement he sat in the king’s throne, and put on his crown that was hanging on the side of the throne. It was very hot that day, and it wasn’t long until Nanzi too fell asleep, right there on the king’s throne. He was so deep in sleep and snoring so loud, that even when the king found him in his seat, Nanzi did not even notice. Shon Arei was flabbergasted by the sight of Nanzi on his throne, wearing his crown. How disrespectful! “Soldiers, get him!” he commanded. Nanzi was sound asleep, but when the soldiers picked him up, he jumped from fright. By then though, the soldier already had him in their hold.

“Put him in a sack, stitch it up and throw him in the ocean!” the king said furiously. Two soldiers immediately entered the chamber, took the crown off Nanzi’s head and pushed him in a sack. Nanzi was terrified; it looks like this time he won’t get away with his schemes. To get to the ocean, the soldier walked a long distance, and where beginning to feel very thirsty. Luckily they passed by a pub, and decided to have a nice cold beer. They set the sack with Nanzi in it outside and went to enjoy the refreshments. Nanzi was still trembling with fear in the sack. What is that he hears? A herd of sheep walking by? “Compadre, listen here!” Nanzi screamed as loud as he could. The sheep herder got close to the sack.

“What is this?” “Man, there is something very beautiful in here that you can see. It’s very rare and strange, but indeed, there is something so beautiful in here that you’ve never seen or will ever see,” Nanzi told the herder.

The herder, very dumb, believed Nanzi’s word. “Let me see!” he said. “Well if you must insist,” Nanzi said, “I’ll let you take a look, but only for a quick second.” The herder opened the sack, and Nanzi immediately jumped out. Before the herder could even take a look into the sack, Nanzi pushed him in it, and the herder fell head first in. Nanzi didn’t waste any time, and closed off the sack real tight. He then picked up the herder’s hat and starting walking behind the traveling sheep as if nothing happened. After a little while, the soldiers headed back outside to continue their journey. As they picked up the sack, the poor herder started screaming to let him out, but the soldiers ignored him, thinking it was Nanzi.

Shon Arei went strolling a while later. He thought to himself: “This time Nanzi could not get away with his foolishness. He probably drowned



in that sack ages ago.” That is why, when he saw Nanzi walk behind the herd of sheep on the street, he was flabbergasted again. “Nanzi! Aren’t you suppose to be at the bottom of the ocean floor?”

“I was, Your Majesty,” Nanzi replied. But you know what, there is so many things to see down there in the sack! Like this herd of sheep. Seeing that they had no herder, I started walking behind them and gained their trust pretty quickly. At the bottom of the ocean there are so many wonderful things, like diamonds, and bags of gold. Chests of silver and other precious stones,” Nanzi told the king.

“What is that you say?” the king was intrigued. “I want to see it too!” The king immediately demanded to his soldiers to be put in a sack and be placed in the ocean. Naturally, Shon Arei died because of this. He was never found again. Nanzi followed the soldier back to the castle, where sat once again on the late king’s thrown and put his crown on. He took possession of all of Shon Arei’s belongings, and lived the rest of his life as king. □

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Story and pictures are from “Kon Nanzi a Nek Shon Arei (i otro kuentanan antiano di e araña sabi)” by Nilda Pinto.



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Dining in? Try making a local favorite How to make “funchi hasa”

(Oranjestad)—A night in can be just as fun as a night out on the town, especially if you got the right snacks to munch on. One of the most famous Aruban snacks or appetizers is “funchi hasa” (fried polenta sticks). A super easy meal that adults and children will both enjoy. Here’s how to make it!



funchi for a quick and filling snack.

Ingredients (measured by heart)

1. Polenta flour*
2. Water
3. Butter
4. Salt to taste

Directions

Bring water to a boil in a medium-sized sauce pan.

Add in some salt and butter to taste in the boiling water and let this dissolve and melt. Then, gradually add the flour while stirring with a wooden spoon. The mixture will start to begin to harden pretty fast, so be careful not to add too much. At this phase of cooking, you want a goopy thick mixture, but thin enough so you can continue to stir to get all the lumps out.

After reaching a semi-firm, yet flexible texture, grab a baking pan or any large, deep plate, and pour the mixture in. Be sure that this plate is wet or greased so that the mixture does not stick to the bottom. Let this cool completely while



it firms up for the last time. Once it's cooled you can enjoy it as is, topped with some butter or shredded cheese. Or, you can take it to another level of deliciousness.

When your funchi is firm enough, cut it into strips (size is up to you). Heat up some oil in a pan and fry those babies up! After fry-

ing, you can top it with some cheese or enjoy it with your favorite dipping sauce.

Note: We recommend the FUNCHI FRESKU polenta flour brand that is sold in all supermarkets on the island. You can also use yellow corn flour from the brand PAN.☐

Photo credit of fried funchi sticks: Jacqueline Felida on Pinterest.



The Lionfish And its threat to our marine wild life

(Oranjestad)—Despite its colorful and striking appearance, the lionfish has become a Caribbean-wide problem for Atlantic sea life. The Aruban marine wild life is also affected by this beautiful dilemma, as it is foreign to our waters and has become a danger to our local fish and reefs.



predators in the Caribbean Sea. And this becomes a major problem for our local marine life; if there are no predators to stimulate population control of lionfish, these fish can continue to reproduce and expand to other parts of the Atlantic, become more invasive and dangerous for other types of fish.

For Aruba, the lionfish is a problem especially for our local coral reefs. According to Patrick van Brakel, lionfish expert and hunter from the Hunting Lionfish Aruba foundation, every reef has a “cleaning station”—tiny fish that eat algae and oth-

er types of waste on a reef, thus maintaining the reef's health and providing food to the fish population in the area. However, as the lionfish feeds off of these tiny fish, it becomes harder for the coral reef to maintain its health.

Patrick also shares the origins of lionfish in the Caribbean Sea. It is theorized that the introduction of these fish in the Atlantic happened in Florida, where people would buy lionfish from across the world to keep in their aquariums. However, lionfish grow, and as these buyers realized that the fish were too much upkeep, they were let out into the ocean to roam free. From continental USA, the lionfish travelled to and invaded the entire Caribbean area, from Aruba, Bonaire and Curacao up to New York. In Aruba, lionfish



were discovered in 2009.

Controlling the lionfish population is challenge, as each female fish can lay up to 40,000 eggs a day. Luckily, we have people like van Brakel who dedicate their lives hunting and capturing these invasive species, using them for consumption and jewelry making.

They are caught with a hand spear, an object re-

sembling a garbage picker with 4 sharp prongs. These spears are used like a sling shot to catch lionfish from a distance. These fish are then put into a collecting tube and taken out of the water. Van Brakel not only catches them himself, but also cooks them for locals and tourists at The LionFish Snack Aruba in Paradera. This way, he does his part in protecting the local wild life.☐

Its natural predators in the Indo-Pacific are sharks and barracudas, but in the Caribbean Sea, local fish do not recognize the lionfish as part of their diet. In other words, the lionfish has no

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Visit the natural bridges of Aruba!

(Oranjestad)—After you've visited the Alto Vista Church, the Bushiribana Gold Mill Ruins and the mini natural pool that is located right next to it, you're next up around the northern coast line must be the Natural Bridge. Once the largest natural bridge in the Caribbean, this bridge has been a tourist attraction for many years.

The bridge was formed during thousands of years, cut and crafted by the wild waves that crash into the coral stone walls of the coast. Before its collapse, this bridge measured 30 meters in length and 7 meters in height, making it the biggest natural bridge in the Caribbean at the time. For many years, this site was



also a frequently visited beach, as the bridge had a small opening through which the water would flow into the tiny beach.

Unfortunately in 2005, the bridge collapsed, and the little beach dried up. Despite this, this site remained a tourist attraction, with many visitors walking along the coral cliffs of the bridge to see the spectacular view

of the northern coastline and the Caribbean Sea. Visitors can also still visit the souvenir shop on the left of the bridge entrance.

While the natural bridge no longer is functional, there is now a smaller natural bridge very close. This bridge is often called the "Baby Bridge" or "Daughter Bridge". □



Aruba Tourism Authority honored a loyal visitor at Bucuti & Tara Boutique Beach Resort!

The Aruba Tourism Authority recently had the great pleasure of recognizing Goodwill Ambassador of Aruba. The honoree was respectively honored with a certificate for her years of visits, loyalty, and love for the island of Aruba.

The honorary certification is presented on behalf of the Minister of Tourism as a token of appreciation and to say "Masha Danki" to guests who have visited Aruba 10, 20, or 35 years or more consecutively.

The three levels of honor are as follows:

Distinguished Visitor

(10>years consecutively visiting Aruba)
Goodwill Ambassador
(20>years consecutively visiting Aruba)
Emerald Ambassador
(35>years consecutively visiting Aruba)

The honoree was:

Goodwill Ambassador
Ms. Jamie Meadows from
Lewis Center Ohio, United States.

Mr. Jorgino Willems representing the Aruba Tourism Authority, and staff members of Bucuti & Tara Boutique Beach Resort bestowed the certificate upon the honoree, pre-

sented her with gifts, and thanked her for choosing Aruba as her favorite vacation destination, as her home away from home.

The top reasons for returning to Aruba provided by the honoree was:

- Aruba's people.
- Aruba's weather.
- "Bucuti and their wonderful staff"
- "All of my friends who visit at the same time"

On behalf of the Aruba Tourism Authority, we would like to express our sincere gratitude and appreciation to the honoree for her continued visits to the "One Happy Island". □





Article by Etnia Nativa

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Etnia Nativa is close to high rise Hotels



Watertorens

Aruba has long thrived on balance—between cultures, nature, and a relaxed way of life. But growing threats like over-tourism, over-migration, and environmental strain are pushing our island to the edge. This platform is here to protect our heritage and reconnect with what it truly means to be Aruban.

In the previous episode, we explored the evolution of Aruba's drinking water system, highlighting the construction of two water towers in 1939—one in Oranjestad and the other in San Nicolas. These towers significantly increased the island's initial water storage capacity and helped maintain constant pressure in the distribution lines during peak hours.

Beyond simply reaching every household and regulating pressure, the towers played a vital role in improving hygiene and public health across Aruba.

Standing 40 meters tall and built 25 meters above sea level, each tower housed a reservoir with a capacity of 400 cubic meters. Designed by architect Pieter van Stuivenberg, they are notable for their distinctive and innovative Art Deco architecture.

During the severe drought of the 1970s, the San Nicolas Water Tower operated near full capacity. However, with the opening of the desalination plant in Balashi

in 1979, the tower became obsolete. It was transferred to the Monument Foundation in 1996, restored, and finally reopened in 2016 as an industrial museum. The Oranjestad Water Tower was inaugurated three months later. Located on J.G. Eman Street, it housed the offices of the Administrative Jurisdiction Ordinance Appeals Committee (LAR), while the water service offices were located at its base. Its architectural design—an elegant blend of Nieuwe Bouwen (New Building) and American Art Deco—is especially evident in the tall, vertical columns that define its façade.

As Aruba's population grew, new housing developments created a demand for larger strategically placed water tanks. The Oranjestad tower was eventually decommissioned and dismantled in 1990. The construction of the original towers not only ensured a consistent water supply but also contributed significantly to public hygiene, safety, and essential services. Clean, pressurized water was critical for daily routines and vital facilities such as hospitals, schools, the abattoir, and other sanitation-de-

pendent sites. Flush toilets and functioning sewage systems helped prevent disease by minimizing the infiltration of bacteria or contaminated groundwater through pipe leaks.

By storing water for peak demand—such as in the mornings or on hot days—the towers helped ease pressure on treatment plants and provided a crucial reserve for emergencies like fires, power outages, or burst pipes. Because the stored water had already been disinfected at the treatment plant, the towers also played a key role in preserving water quality throughout the distribution system.

WEB Aruba N.V. has been supplying the island with drinking water since 1932 and began generating electricity in 1958. Today, it uses a combination of Multi-Stage Flash Distillation and Seawater Reverse Osmosis (SWRO) to desalinate seawater and deliver high-quality water to the community. The process begins with seawater collection and preliminary filtration, followed by desalination, where the true transformation occurs. In the SWRO stage, seawater is forced through specialized membranes, reducing its salt content from around 55,000 ppm to approximately 400 ppm. Since this is still too salty for consumption, the water passes through the membranes a second time, bringing salinity down to just 8–10 ppm.

In the final stage, the water is re-mineralized by adding specific phosphates approved by NSF International. This step ensures the water meets health and safety standards before it is distributed through the pipeline network.

Thanks to this advanced process, Aruba is recognized as a global leader in the production of safe, healthy, and high-quality drinking water. It's a continuous effort—maintaining, improving, and evolving, day by day. □

Curious about Aruba's true identity? Don't wait until the end of your trip—visit Etnia Nativa, the Caribbean's only living museum. Since 1994, we've been preserving culture, nature, and heritage. We're co-founders of Aruba's National Park and the Archaeological Museum Aruba, and active board members of several foundations. More than a museum, it's a gateway to Aruba's spiritual roots and authentic soul. WhatsApp +297 592 2702 etniana03@gmail.com.



Alto Vista chapel and its link to Aruba's origins

According to Etnia Nativa, in the 18th century most of the inhabitants of Aruba were indigenous who lived on the north coast, one of the largest communities lived in Alto Vista.

As they were very religious, they had a chief with the name of Antonio Silvester who guided them in the Christian life and it was he who decided to build a stone chapel with a roof of corn rods, which would serve as a place of prayer. In 1750 it was blessed by Father Algemesi who came from Coro-Venezuela and appointed Domingo Antonio Silvester as the island's first prosecutor in the name of the Spanish crown and Rome. In 1752 the prosecution passed into the hands of Antonio Silvester's son-in-law, Miguel Álvarez, who continued to guide the parishioners in their prayers.

According to the book, The History of Alto Vista by R.H. Nooyen, it is not known when Domingo Antonio Silvester came to Aruba from Venezuela. The elders believe Antonio was a Spaniard. In 1780, father Joseph Antonio de la Vegal called Bernardino Silvester, one of Antonio's sons with his wife



Anna Cathalina Tromp, “neighbors and naturals of the island Aruba” and thus they became natives.

some made of stone and others of clay. Nowadays, only around six of these houses remain.

At the end of the eighteen century many inhabitants the island died as a result of the black fever epidemic and since people believed that the Alto Vista area was the most infected, they began to build their homes further south within the Noord area, so the town of Noord began to grow into a community till getting its own Church. However religious festivals continued to be celebrated at this sacred native place, with the custom of arriving in procession to Alto Vista.

Two-hundred years after the beautiful time of Alto Vista, people can no longer see much of the town of Alto Vista from 1750. With a lot of work they found the old foundations of the Church of the Queen of the Holiest Rosary to build a new chapel on the same place. The entire surrounding area was empty and desolated, making it hard to imagine that Alto Vista was a town at all. A hundred years later, people can see the remains of around twenty houses,

South of the chapel in the yard two graves can be observed, there was the cemetery which father Pablo de Algemesi blessed. It is not certain, but it is believed that the two graves belong to Antonio Silvester and Miguel Alvares, according to Nooyen. About 50 meters near the chapel there are still the markings of an old house, where Antonio and Bernardino Silvester would have lived. About 200 meters from the chapel there is a water tank which the locals call Tanki Cacique. In the past this tank was closed. But mostly water was brought out from the Poz di Noord, a well dug in the sand.

The chapel can be viewed from basically any point in the north side, even from Paradera and Sero Plat. All the historical remains around the chapel provide us with an idea on how the old people of Alto Vista used to live. Don't miss the opportunity to visit a place of historical significance with a window to Aruba's past. □

Unique fauna of Aruba

For a small island, Aruba sure has a lot of unique treasures. Among these, we have some subspecies of animals that are unique to our island. These have evolved to perfectly adapt to our desert climate and make Aruba their home. At the same time, they are part of what makes Aruba truly one of a kind.

Cascabel (rattlesnake, *Crotalus durissus unicolor*)

According to the Arikok National Park, Aruba knows two kinds of snakes, the Santanero and the Cascabel. The cascabel belongs to the rattlesnake family. The cascabel is the only venomous snake from Aruba. It has a length of 65cm to 100cm, and is about 4 to 5cm wide. Its color varies from light brown to grey-brown,

and its underbelly is white. On its back there are marks that are a little darker, in the shape of diamonds.

Its reproduction is oviparous, meaning the offspring can hatch from their eggs just before, during or immediately after laying.

The cascabel lives mainly in the Arikok National Park. It likes to live in dark places, and is thus found hidden among the limestone rocks and under stones. As a defense mechanism, the cascabel uses its rattle as a warning, and it is not an aggressive animal.

The cascabel feeds on lizards, small mammals such as rats and mice. It paralyzes or kills its prey with its venom, which is injected through a

bite. The enemies of the cascabel are donkeys, goats, humans and cars. Humans are the biggest enemy of the cascabel, as they kill them and destroy their habitat for urbanization.

Shoco (burrowing owl, *Athene cunicularia arubensis*)

The shoco is a small bird which is seldom seen. They are active during the day but are more active later in the day and at night for hunting. These owls have very good night vision and very good hearing. The shoco is the national symbol of Aruba.

The shoco has about 20cm of length, and the females are slightly heavier than the males. They are light brown in color, with many



white spots. The belly of the Shoco is either white or light brown, and the shoco has striking yellow eyes. Its beak is yellow/green. Young owls do not have white spots and are lighter in color.

The nest of the shoco is a burrow in the ground. If the shoco cannot find a burrow, it will dig one in soft soil. The shoco lays one or two eggs every other day until all the eggs are laid – a shoco can lay up to four eggs. The first owlets hatch after three to four weeks. The shoco owl takes care of the owlets for

three months until they leave the nest. Only a few owlets survive.

The owls dig burrows in the ground with low grass vegetation. An owl can live up to nine years.

Its defense mechanism is simply to fly away or retreat to its burrows. They eat mostly insects, mice and lizards, and the main threats to their survival are boas – an invasive species introduced by humans as pets – and humans through destruction of their habitat. □

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS 40 Give a

1 Enjoy the speech library

5 Blinds 42 External piece

9 TV's item "Uncle Miltie"

10 Car quartet

12 Be of use

13 Early Mexican

14 Reserved money

16 Can. neighbor

17 "— we there yet?"

18 Trial

20 Reduce

22 "Clumsy mel"

23 Routine

25 Asian language

28 Charge criminally

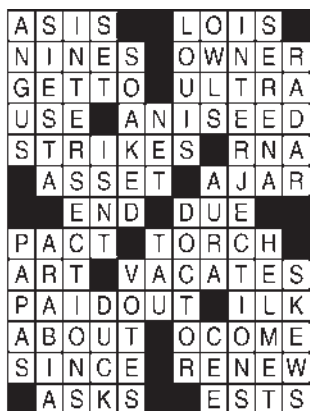
32 London theater area

34 "— TURN"

35 Consume

36 Ring carrier

38 Dodge



DOWN

1 Historic rider

2 Wipes off

3 Stepped down

4 Edits out

5 Antlered animals

6 Designer Claiborne

7 Music's Toscanini

8 Prepares to drive

9 Insipid

11 Looks over

15 Bona fide aspirin

19 Related

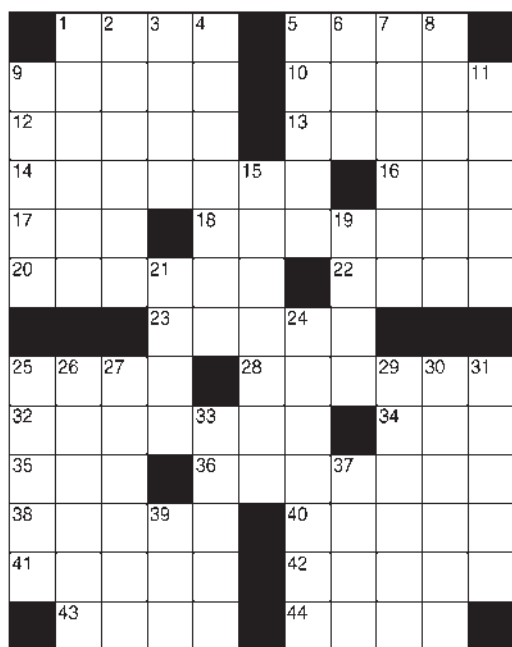
21 Hearts, dial

24 Et cetera Roger

25 Jacket material

37 Faithful

39 Bear's lair



8-5

AXYDLBAAXR
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

8-5 **CRYPTOQUOTE**

KEB STJI FOI UEY UTQW —

UTQ TZFIL UTQ EZ OEF,

WFAGG WXJJIL. — LASOTLU

TUTJW

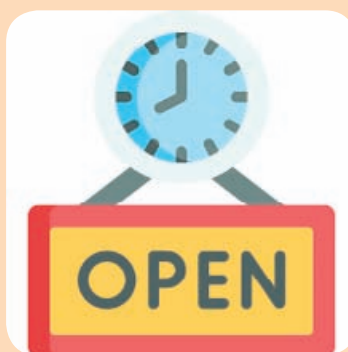
Cryptoquote: HISTORY IS A SET OF LIES THAT EVERYONE HAS AGREED UPON. — NAPOLEON BONAPARTE

Cruise ship Schedule: Aug 03 - 13 2025

			ARR	DEPT	BERTH	
SUN	03	FREEWINDS - Dept.	****	22.30	E	-
TUE	05	CARNIVAL HORIZON	09.00	23.00	C	1
		CARNIVAL MARDI GRAS	13.00	23.00	I	1
WED	06	FREEWINDS	06.00	****	E	1
SUN	10	FREEWINDS - Dept.	****	22.30	E	-
TUE	12	ADVENTURE OF THE SEAS	07.00	16.00	C	1
WED	13	OASIS OF THE SEAS	11.00	23.00	I	1
		RHAPSODY OF THE SEAS	08.00	23.00	B	1

Helpful tips for your stay on Aruba

(Oranjestad)—When traveling to another country, especially for the first time, it is always better to be over-prepared than under-prepared. That is why we have a list of basic but important information that we think may come in handy to Aruba's visitors.



Supermarket hours

Supermarket hours may vary depending on where you are staying on the island. Generally though, most supermarkets are open from 8am to 8 or 10pm, Monday through Saturday. On Sundays, supermarkets generally close earlier; mostly around 2pm.



Safety

Since February 2024, Aruba has been categorized as the safest country in the Caribbean by The Telegraph, and many tourist that visit have often told us how they feel safe to explore the island or walk around at night. However, rare incidents do occur, so keep yourself and your belongings safe.



Drinking water

The water that flows through the sinks of every house, hotels and other establishments is distilled and perfectly safe to drink. Aruba's drinking water exceeds WHO's international standards for water quality, so there is no need to buy bottled water from the store.

SUDOKU

To play sudoku, use logic to fill the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the numbers 1-9 only once. Puzzle difficulty increases from Monday to Sunday.

King Classic Sudoku

9						1	2	3
5					3			4
1		4					5	
8						2	9	
2			6					5
		9		5		8		
6		1		2				7
		8	5		4		3	
	9			7				

Difficulty: ★★★

7/30

Answer to previous puzzle

4	5	7	6	2	8	1	3	9
8	1	3	9	4	7	6	5	2
9	6	2	3	5	1	7	4	8
3	9	5	7	1	2	8	6	4
7	8	6	4	3	5	9	2	1
1	2	4	8	6	9	5	7	3
6	7	1	2	8	4	3	9	5
5	4	9	1	7	3	2	8	6
2	3	8	5	9	6	4	1	7

Difficulty: ★★

7/29

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Why value investing has worked better outside the U.S.

Dan Lefkovitz of Morningstar

I recently interviewed investor and author Daniel Rasmussen for The Long View podcast, where he commented that "value hasn't worked in the U.S., but it's worked fine internationally."

I was intrigued by this observation. So, I looked at Morningstar's indexes. Sure enough, value investing has prospered beyond American shores this year, as well as over the past three-, five-, and 10-year periods.

'Magnificent Seven' vs. 'Granolas'

US stocks of all styles have beaten international stocks for years, due to a strengthening dollar, superior returns on invested capital, and expanding price multiples.

Morningstar's US growth index is dominated by the "Magnificent Seven." But internationally, the scale is far smaller. There is not a single public company outside the US currently worth \$1 trillion.

There was a time when the "Granolas" stocks

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were being promoted as Europe's answer to the Magnificent Seven (names like GSK, Roche, Nestle, L'Oreal and AstraZeneca). But don't blame yourself if you haven't heard of the Granolas. They never really rivaled the Magnificent Seven from a performance perspective. □

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2 Bed Ocean View: \$24,500
2 Bed Garden View: \$20,000
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GOLD SEASON

2 Bed Oceanfront: \$21,500
2 Bed Oceanside: \$15,500
2 Bed Ocean View: \$14,500
2 Bed Garden View: \$13,000
3 Bed Ocean View: \$30,000

Marriott Aruba Ocean Club

PLATINUM SEASON

2 Bed Oceanfront: \$60,000
2 Bed Ocean View: \$29,000
1 Bed Ocean Front: \$23,000
1 Bed Ocean View: \$17,500

GOLD SEASON

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Thinking of traveling solo? Tracee Ellis Ross has suggestions on how to do it well

By **ALICIA RANCILIO**
Associated Press

Tracee Ellis Ross, the actor best-known for her roles in shows like "black-ish" and "Girlfriends," happens to be single and without children, but she doesn't let either hold her back from experiencing a fulfilling, joyful life, especially when it comes to vacations.

When friends and family can't join her, or if she just wants to decompress, Ross will jet-set by herself and have a fabulous time doing it. She says she takes at least one solo trip a year, and if vacationing with others, might stay a little longer to include alone time.

In a new three-part docu-series streaming on The Roku Channel, "Solo Traveling with Tracee Ellis Ross," a camera crew follows the actor on solo trips to Marrakech, Morocco; Cancún, Mexico; and Marbella, Spain.

Ross says her first solo travel experience was in her 20s, and she's learned over the years that even the uncomfortable moments of being by herself have given her coping skills for everyday life.

"What I find is that I gain a muscle strength around being uncomfortable," she told The Associated Press



Tracee Ellis Ross arrives at the Chanel Pre-Oscar Dinner at The Beverly Hills Hotel on Saturday, Feb. 8, 2020, in Beverly Hills, Calif.

in a recent interview. "It's like when a baseball player swings with two bats, and then by the time they get to the one bat, it feels lighter. When you get back into your regular day life and uncomfortable things happen, I have muscle memory to know how to walk through this on my own." Ross shared tips to traveling as a party of one:

Ease into it

"Start by going to dinner by yourself," Ross says. "And if you feel nervous about do-

ing that, go to dinner by yourself on a Tuesday night at 6 o'clock and work your way up to going to dinner by yourself on a Saturday or Friday night at 8 o'clock. "Walk up to the host and say, 'I need a table for one.' See what it feels like to be in that experience because it will only be that times 10 on vacation."

She suggests bringing something like a book or an iPad when you're eating alone, and also for when you're spending time in

your room.

That way, "if you end up having to stay in your hotel room the whole time and only going to a restaurant in your hotel or somewhere just around the corner, you don't feel like you have ruined your trip and done something stupid."

Know why you're taking the trip

Ross says there are different reasons for solo trips and you need to understand what yours is.

"Are you going on a solo

trip because you're single and want to meet other people? Are you going on a solo trip because your life is overwhelmed with your children, your dogs, your cats, your job, your life, your survival, all the things, and you're going to have a moment to sort of recharge and get away by yourself? Or are you going for an adventure?" she asks.

Once you've decided what kind of experience you're seeking, you can make plans to achieve it realistically and safely.

Safety, safety, safety

No matter how independent you are, certain kinds of travelers are more vulnerable than others, especially if they're by themselves, Ross notes. Take safety seriously when mapping out your itinerary.

"You might not feel vulnerable, but depending on where you're going, it might leave you vulnerable. That's a very specific distinction and something to plan for in order to have a good experience," she says.

"If you are a Black woman, if you are a woman, if you are LGBTQIA, if you are non-binary, if you are differently abled that might leave you vulnerable in a foreign place. □

Book Review: 'Gwyneth' is a portrait of a pioneering and polarizing 'It girl' and wellness mogul



This cover image released by Gallery Books shows "Gwyneth: The Biography" by Amy Odell.

Associated Press

By **MAE ANDERSON**
Associated Press

"Gwyneth: The Biography," Amy Odell's thorough portrait of Gwyneth Paltrow, splits her life and career into two distinct periods: the rise (and fall) of the quintessential '90s Hollywood "It girl," and her transformation to wellness mogul with the creation of lifestyle brand Goop.

In both phases, she struggles with likeability in the press and from the public, often coming across in interviews as elitist and out of touch with "normal" Americans. But that hasn't stopped her from succeeding on both fronts.

Blond, glamorous and patrician, Paltrow is the ultimate nepo baby, the daughter of actor Blythe Danner and TV producer Bruce Paltrow, acting from an early age at the Williamstown Theatre Festival in Massachusetts.

In the first half of the book, Odell charts Paltrow's rise from chain-smoking party girl at elite New York private school Spence to Hollywood "It girl." She starred in 1990s classics like "Emma," "Sliding Doors" and "Shakespeare in Love," for which she won an Oscar at 26. She was on the cover of Vogue and constantly in the tabloids with movie star

boyfriends like Brad Pitt and Ben Affleck.

But she eventually soured on Hollywood and turned to her burgeoning interest in lifestyle and wellness. She started Goop as a newsletter in 2008.

Goop promoted some dubious wellness theories and was hit with the same press bashing as she had gotten as an actor. "Gwyneth has, to her extraordinary credit, found a way to be even more annoying," the Guardian wrote when Goop launched in 2008.

But Odell who didn't have access to Paltrow or any close family or friends, but based the book on more than 200 interviews with people who know or worked with Paltrow shows Paltrow has a masterful control of her image, working negative press to her advantage.

At Goop, a \$66 jade egg meant to be inserted vaginally and a \$75 candle called "This Smells Like My Vagina" were ridiculed in the press and sold out in short order.

When Goop launched a travel app, an advertiser sponsored it with the promise that it would reach 10,000 downloads. "Call it G. Spotting," Gwyneth told an executive, according to Odell. □

Katie Ledecky remains unbeatable in the 1,500 freestyle taking the title again at the worlds

By **STEPHEN WADE**

AP Sports Writer

SINGAPORE (AP) — Katie Ledecky has ceded a tiny bit of ground in other events, but she's still unbeatable in the 1,500-meter freestyle. She won it again Tuesday in the swimming world championships in Singapore, finishing in 15 minutes, 26.44 seconds. Simona Quadarella of Italy took silver in 15:31.79 — a European record — with bronze for Lani Pallister of Australia in 15:41.18 in a very quick-paced race.

"I was just trying to get out fast, but comfortable enough that I could go from there," Ledecky said. "I'm happy with the time and happy with the swim."

"I love this race," she added. "It was the race I broke my first world record in 2013. Lots of great races over the years."

Ledecky was ahead of her world-record pace through 1,250 meters, pushed early by Pallister. It was Ledecky's second medal in these games after taking bronze in the 400 free behind Canadian Summer McIntosh. The numbers speak to Ledecky's dominance, the



Katie Ledecky of the United States competes in the women's 1500m freestyle final at the World Aquatics Championships in Singapore, Tuesday, July 29, 2025.

Associated Press

most decorated female swimmer in history who has been on top for more than a decade.

With Tuesday's swim she now owns 25 the top 26 times in history in the 1,500. Her time Tuesday was the fifth fastest, not far off her world record of 15:20.48 set in 2018.

It was her 22nd gold medal in a world championships and her 28th overall. Add to that nine Olympic gold medals and 14 overall. If you're not counting, that's 42 Olympic and world medals — 31 gold.

Watching from the stands was new International Olym-

pic Committee President Kirsty Coventry. She was joined by former president Thomas Bach. Coventry was an Olympic gold-medal winner for Zimbabwe in 2004 and 2008 in the 200-meter backstroke.

The Americans had the top qualifying times going into

four finals and won one gold and three silver medals with very close finishes in all three. The United States team have been battling what officials called "acute gastroenteritis" picked up at a training camp in Thailand before arriving in Singapore.

American head coach Greg Meehan said much of team had turned the corner.

"We're taking it a day at a time," he said in an interview with American network NBC. "Obviously, this is not how we thought the first few days of this competition would go. But I'm really proud of our team, our medical staff working overtime. You don't want your medical staff working overtime."

"If you were in our team area you would never know that the overall majority of the team has gone through something over the last few days," Meehan added, saying the team "vibe" was good.

McIntosh, who won two gold medals the first two days, did not race on Tuesday, Day 3 of the competition. She will face Ledecky in the 800, maybe the most anticipated race of the worlds. □

Tadej Pogačar skips Spanish Vuelta to recover from Tour de France triumph

By **SAMUEL PETREQUIN**

AP Sports Writer

PARIS (AP) — Four-time Tour de France champion Tadej Pogačar has decided against taking part in the Spanish Vuelta next month as he recovers after winning cycling's biggest race.

"After such a demanding Tour, we decided it was best to take a break," Pogačar said. "The Vuelta is of course a race I would dearly love to return to. I have fantastic memories there from 2019 (finishing third), but now the body is telling me to rest."

The Slovenian rider from the UAE Team Emirates-XRG was not included in the eight-man squad for the Vuelta, which will start

on Aug. 23. The team will be led by Portuguese rider João Almeida who retired from the Tour earlier this month after fracturing a rib

and Spain's Juan Ayuso. After doing the Giro d'Italia and Tour double last year, Pogačar had planned to ride both the Tour and the



Tour de France winner Tadej Pogacar of Slovenia crosses the finish line of the twenty-first stage of the Tour de France cycling race over 132.3 kilometers (82.1 miles) with start in Mantes-la-Ville and finish on the Champs-Élysées in Paris, France, Sunday, July 27, 2025.

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Vuelta this summer.

"The idea this year was for Tadej to return to the Vuelta, but the season has been a long one for him," the team's sports manager Matxin Fernández said. "We spoke and agreed that the best thing for him now is to take a good rest and build up to his final season goals."

It has already been a long season for Pogačar, a versatile rider known for his unsatiable appetite for victory. In addition to his Tour title, he also won the Critérium du Dauphiné, Liège-Bastogne-Liège, the Flèche Wallonne and Strade Bianche this year.

On the way to his fourth Tour title, Pogačar won four stages to take his Tour

tally to 21, and 30 at major races, including six at the Giro d'Italia and three at the Vuelta. Only four riders have won the Tour de France five times: Belgian Eddy Merckx, Spaniard Miguel Induráin and Frenchmen Jacques Anquetil and Bernard Hinault. Pogačar will take a break until September. He is planning to compete in North America at the Grand Prix Cycliste de Québec and Grand Prix Cycliste de Montréal.

"I'm excited to go back to Canada. The races are tough but beautiful, and they fit my style well," said Pogačar, who also wants to defend his world champion title later this year in Kigali, Rwanda. □

Venus Williams receives a wild-card entry with Reilly Opelka to play mixed doubles at the US Open

By **HOWARD FENDRICH**
AP Tennis Writer

Venus Williams' comeback is headed to the U.S. Open next month, when she will enter the redesigned mixed doubles tournament with Reilly Opelka via a wild-card entry.

The 45-year-old Williams, who returned to the tennis tour last week after more than a year away, and Opelka were among the 14 teams announced Tuesday by the U.S. Tennis Association for its mixed doubles event on Aug. 19-20.

Eight of the pairings received direct entry into the field based on having the highest combined current singles rankings, and six were given wild cards by



Venus Williams lunges for the ball during a match against Magdalena Frech, of Poland, at the Citi Open tennis tournament Thursday, July 24, 2025, in Washington.

It's a group of star players that stands in stark contrast to the sort of lesser-known players and doubles specialists usually found in the mixed doubles bracket at a Grand Slam tournament. Some players were critical of the planned changes when they were announced in February, and Errani and Vavassori called the new setup a "pseudo-exhibition focused only on entertainment and show" that would shut out true doubles players.

In a bid to attract some of the sport's biggest names, the USTA increased the prize money, switched mixed doubles from the same time as the singles and other doubles events to the week before the start of singles competition and reduced the format to first-to-four-game sets with no-ad scoring.

A total of 16 duos will be competing for the \$1 million top prize; the last two wild-card pairs will be announced by the USTA later. It is still possible that Williams will ask for, and receive, a wild-card entry for singles. Those are expected to be announced by the USTA the week of Aug. 11.

She won one match each in singles and doubles at the D.C. Open in Washington last week after not competing anywhere since the Miami Open in March 2024.

Williams owns seven Grand Slam titles in singles, 14 in women's doubles all won with her younger sister Serena and two in mixed doubles. The 6-foot-11 (2.11-meter) Opelka is a 27-year-old American who used to be ranked in the top 20 and is now No. 74 after missing nearly two full seasons because of injuries. □

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the USTA.

The players with spots in the bracket include nine who have won at least one Grand Slam singles title and 14 who are ranked in the WTA or ATP top 10 for singles. The eight duos with direct entry are No. 11 Emma Navarro and No. 1 Jannik Sinner; No. 10 Paula Badosa and No. 5 Jack Draper; No. 3 Iga Swiatek and No. 13 Casper Ruud; No. 12 Elena Rybakina and No. 4 Taylor Fritz; No. 7 Amanda Anisimova and No. 9 Holger Rune; Belinda Bencic and No. 3 Alexander Zverev; No. 4 Jessica Pegula and No. 15 Tommy Paul; No. 5 Mirra Andrejeva and No. 14 Daniil Medvedev. Badosa originally had sought a place in the field with Stefanos Tsitsipas, while Draper initially was going to play alongside Zheng Qinwen.

In addition to Williams-Opelka, the wild-card entrants are Emma Raducanu and No. 2 Carlos Alcaraz; No. 8 Madison Keys and No. 12 Frances Tiafoe; Olga Danilovic and No. 6 Novak Djokovic; Taylor Townsend who made her debut at No. 1 in women's doubles this week and No. 7 Ben Shelton; and last year's U.S. Open mixed doubles champions, Sara Errani and Andrea Vavassori.

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